

Lifetime migration by province of birth. Census figures on province of birth provide some indication on lifetime migration flows by comparing the number of persons born in a given province with their present province of residence. Such figures do not indicate the periodicity of the migrating process, and apply only to the Canadian-born population presently living in a given province. Nevertheless, they do reflect something of the major patterns of interprovincial movement over the years.

According to the 1986 Census, 85% of persons born in Canada and still living in Canada resided in their province of birth. This level was virtually unchanged since the 1971 Census.

Data from the 1986 Census (Table 2.44) show that Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories were net gainers of lifetime migrants from other provinces, while the remaining provinces were net losers. In the provinces of Quebec and Newfoundland, only 4.4% and 4.5% of their respective populations were born in other parts of Canada, outside their province of residence. At the other extreme, 62.3% of Canadian-born residents in Yukon were born elsewhere in Canada. These percentages reflect the relatively low rate of in-migration among Canadian-born residents to these two provinces and a high rate to Yukon. At the same time, though, due to out-migration, over half (54%) of persons born in Yukon Territory were living elsewhere in Canada. In contrast, just 8% of the Quebec-born population, and 9% of Ontario-born lived outside their province of birth, a reflection of relatively low out-migration rates for these two provinces.

Migration by residence five years ago. Useful estimates of mobility and migration can be obtained in national Censuses from questions about the place of residence of each person on the preceding Census date, five years earlier. From a comparison with the location of a person's present residence, it is possible to estimate the size, directional flows and characteristics of the migrating population. The 1986 Census included questions on place of residence on June 3, 1981.

Census figures show that 43.7% of Canada's population, age 5 and over in 1981, lived in a different dwelling than they had five years earlier; 24.2% had moved within the same municipality; and 19.5% had moved from one municipality to another. The last group consisted of 13.5% who moved within the same province, 4.0% from one province to another, and 2.0% from outside Canada.

Over the past 25 years, Canadians were most mobile in the period 1971-76, when almost half (48.5%) of the population changed dwellings. The proportion of the population who moved during 1981-86 (43.7%) was the lowest since 1961. For additional information see Tables 2.45, 2.46 and 2.47.

Interprovincial migration. In 1986, just under a million people lived in a different province than they had five years earlier. Ontario was the most favoured province of destination for migrants from other provinces (30.9%), followed by Alberta (19.2%), and British Columbia (16.4%). Alberta was the largest single provincial source of interprovincial migrants (22.2%), which resulted in a net internal migration loss of 27,670 people. Ontario, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island experienced net internal migration gains. The remaining provinces, Yukon and Northwest Territories recorded losses.

Both the level and direction of interprovincial migration tend to relate to regional economic conditions. This was most apparent in the period 1976 to 1981 when — as a direct consequence of the Alberta resource boom — all provinces east of Alberta experienced net outflows of population to the benefit of Alberta and, to a lesser extent, British Columbia. Falling international oil prices in the early 1980s brought an abrupt end to the resource boom and the westward shift of population. In the first half of this decade, Ontario replaced Alberta as the preferred destination of persons moving from elsewhere in Canada.

The overall effect of migration from outside Canada (comprising immigrants and returning Canadians) was to offset the net loss of population due to internal migration for the provinces of New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. However, the 1986 Census did not count emigrants and therefore it is not possible to take into account the effects of emigration. Among provinces receiving the largest share of migrants from outside Canada were Ontario (47.7%), Quebec (15.6%), British Columbia (15.0%) and Alberta (12.1%).

Migration to and from metropolitan areas. Paralleling trends at the provincial level, more people left the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of both Calgary and Edmonton for other places in Canada than arrived from other Canadian locations between 1981 and 1986. The CMA of Edmonton recorded a net outflow of 15,555 over the five-year period, in contrast to the net inflow of 34,975 people in the five years between 1976 and 1981. Similarly, the CMA of Calgary experienced an outflow of 6,105 residents between